



Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee
January 26, 2016
Approved by the Committee 2/23/16

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

A. Call to order (James Wolf).

A duly noticed meeting of the Land Use Committee (“LUC”) of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council (“GWNC”) was held on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at Wilshire United Methodist Church, Assembly Room, 4350 Wilshire Blvd. Chairman James Wolf called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

B. Roll call.

Philip Farha called the roll. Nine of the 13 Committee Members were present at the Roll Call: Patricia Carroll, Philip Farha, Mike Genewick, Karen Gilman, Dick Herman, Joseph Hoffman, Jeff McManus, Caroline Moser and James Wolf. Four Committee Members were absent: Ann Eggleston, John Gresham, Barbara Savage and Julie Stromberg. The GWNC Land Use Committee quorum (the minimum number of Committee Members needing to be present to take binding votes on Agendized Items) is seven, so the Committee could take such votes. Thirteen Committee Seats were filled (by election or appointment). [To apply see www.GWNC.org and <http://www.greaterwilshire.org/site/files/GreaterWilshireApprovedReorderedBylawAmendments051712Updated102612.pdf>.] Also attending: 22 Stakeholders and guests.

C. Nomination and confirmation of new Committee Secretary.

Philip Farha agreed to accept the Secretary position until the end of the board terms this spring. Joe Hoffman moved that Mr. Farha be appointed Committee Secretary. Patti Carroll seconded the nomination. It was approved unanimously.

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Terri Dickerhoff commented about Orange Theory Fitness, 640 N. LaBrea Ave. They are asking to extend their opening hours from 7:00 a.m. to two hours earlier at 5:00 a.m.; they still would close at 8:00 p.m. She said “we built an acoustical box inside the space” to minimize noise; “it shouldn’t impact the neighborhood in any way.” They “will still keep the front lobby area open . . . [the box] was designed by an acoustical engineer.” She explained that “the class size is usually around 10 to 15 people . . . we are adjacent to a bank [Wells Fargo] . . . on the LaBrea side” When asked about the existing surface parking lot immediately to the east of the building

Ms. Dickerhoff reported that she understood that the application is on hold right now . . . there is underground parking associated with that request . . . it has the 12 surface parking spaces.” The Orange Theory Fitness Hearing is tomorrow.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS (Discussion and Action)

A. Review and adoption of December 22, 2015 Minutes.

MOTION (by Mr. McManus, seconded by Ms. Moser): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee approves the Minutes of its December 22, 2015 Meeting as written.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote; zero opposed or abstained.

B. Review of Early Planning Report for possible future agenda items.

Copies were distributed of and the Committee reviewed the “01/26/16 December-January Early Planning Report Summaries for GWNC Area.” Stakeholder Elizabeth Fuller noted that “700 Manhattan is already confirmed for next month.” Ms. Gilman requested that the proposed “Ordinance about amending the LAMC to allow the establishment and operation of homeless shelters in various zones” be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Old Business (Discussion and Possible Action)

A. Discussion and possible board action on the city's draft revisions to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance.

[This paragraph is from the Agenda.] At the December LUC meeting, the committee passed a recommendation that the GWNC board oppose the proposed revisions to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance, on the grounds that it doesn't take into account the specific needs of individual neighborhoods. At the January GWNC Board meeting, however, there was extensive discussion regarding specific points in the revisions that other community groups had called out for further attention, as well as whether there should be some positive acknowledgment of the progress made so far. Board members asked the LUC to consider drafting another letter including more specific recommendations.

Stakeholder Don Hunt noted that attics up to seven feet high are allowed “without counting as floor space” and was concerned that attics may be built and/or used as bedrooms. He suggested a 5 ½-foot limit, “counting anything with ceilings above 5 1/2 feet as part of the floor space.” Mr. Wolf noted that attics less than 5 ½ feet high still could be used as bedrooms, and possible enforcement issues no matter what the height limit. Stakeholder John Perfit of Citrus Square encouraged giving technical feedback to the Board and the City. Shelley Wagers, from the Beverly Grove neighborhood and the advocacy group NoMoreMcMansionsInLosAngeles [McMansionSurvey@gmail.com; www.NoMoreMcMansionsInLosAngeles.org] distributed information handouts and explained the issue. She described a citywide “campaign to stop mansionization in Los Angeles,” happening mostly through “bonuses and exemptions.” She believes that although the current draft of the BMO revisions is a big step in the right direction, it should be revised further to address three issues: the City’s FAR [Floor Area Ratio]

calculation needs clarification; covered porches, patios and breezeways should be included in floor area; and Zoning Administrators should no longer be allowed to grant 10% discretionary floor area bonuses (a process which should be done instead via the standard variance process with open hearings). She encouraged everyone to comment to the City and for the GWNC to issue a Community Impact Statement. She said the City wants “to adopt the amendments by late this summer.” A draft presentation tentatively is scheduled to be presented March 10th to the Planning Commission.

Committee Member Phillip Farha said he disagrees with the proposed BMO changes, because putting tighter limits on new oversized homes makes the ones already built more valuable. Also, he said, the ordinance applies the same rules to all neighborhoods and does not take the needs and character of individual neighborhoods into consideration.

After further discussion, Ms. Gilman and Ms. Moser agreed to serve as a subcommittee to draft a statement to be considered as a GWNC Motion at next month’s meeting; the statement will include the language from Ms. Wagers’ “Update: The campaign to stop mansionization in Los Angeles” handout. Ms. Fuller reminded that Committee Members can distribute information prior to the meeting, but cannot comment on or discuss the statement until it is presented at a public meeting. No Motion was made or vote taken.

- B. Update, discussion and possible board action on a Density Bonus application for a multi-family development at 501-543 N. Wilton (John Reed).

[*This paragraph is from the Agenda.*] Developers presented project at December LUC meeting, where committee members requested further revisions before a vote is taken.

Ms. Fuller reported that “they requested a postponement until next month.” Shirlee Fuqua, the new GWNC Administrator, added that project representative John Reed said they “are working on the changes [the Committee] requested” and they want to present again. No Motion was made or vote taken.

5. New Business (Discussion and Possible Action)

- A. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on an application for a new 8-unit Small Lot Subdivision project at 117 N. Manhattan Pl. (Taik Kim).

Mr. Kim displayed a tract map and three-dimensional model and passed around a site plan and elevations. He said the project is “almost 10,000 square feet . . . we propose eight units”; they could build ten. “Each unit will be about 2,000 square feet . . . we propose a 42’6” height to “the top of the parapet”; the limit is 45 feet. Setbacks would be: front, 15’, sides and rear, five feet. Parking would be at ground level. The proposed selling price would be \$750,000 each. Stakeholder Deborah Willis said “this will sit between two craftsman houses”; she was concerned about “compatibility with the character of the neighborhood” and increased density and parking needs. Mr. McManus encouraged the developers to look at “the Gatsby” at Wilcox and Fountain for an example of a good neighborhood-sensitive design. Ms. Moser encouraged incorporating design elements and material choices from surrounding buildings. Architect Simon Park stated “this is not the final design.” The property was bought about two years ago. Mr. Wolf encouraged the developer to discuss the project with the community and invited them to re-present. Mr.

Park said they could build 12 units “without community input.” No Motion was made or vote taken.

- B. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on an application for a tract map for a Small Lot Subdivision project (six duplexes on small lots) at 850-860 N. Sycamore, 7014 Willoughby, and 853-59 N. Orange Dr. (Michael Gonzales).

Neighbors have expressed concern that demolition has begun for the project without full community review.

Renderings, a site plan and a floor plan were displayed. A representative indicated there are single-family homes on the south and an industrial zone on the north. Attorney Michael Gonzales said “these units have been vacated” and “would be subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance in perpetuity . . . the property is about 300 square feet small to support those adjustments” requested. He said “we’re not allowed to clear the site yet” but they have arranged for the Police to patrol it. Mark Hirshman said “we are surrounded by MR-1” zoning; “what you have now on the site is essentially eight dilapidated homes” that would be replaced by two-story duplexes. The setback would be the required 20 feet. He said surrounding the property “are all two-story apartment buildings.” It was explained that Mole-Richardson employees lived on the site. All units would have three bedrooms in 1,600-1,800 square feet. The front wall would be 42” high. The ground and middle floors would be 10 feet from floor to ceiling. The building would be 24’2” “to the top of the parapet”; 27’ to the top of the recessed compressors. Elevations “are the same on all sides.” Mr. Gonzales stated “the property line would move about 34 feet” to accommodate Planning Dept. requirements to right-size the vehicular entryways. Their Hearing is February 25th. It was said that “we’ve been in constant contact with our neighbors” regarding homeless people on the site and with “the immediate neighbors” about design impacts.

Committee discussion focused mostly on the design (which features strong mid-century modern elements) and whether or not it fits the architectural context of the neighborhood (which has mostly 1920s Spanish-style homes on one side, and industrial development on the other), as well as whether or not there has been any neighborhood outreach besides discussion of the property maintenance. .

MOTION (by Ms. Moser, seconded by Mr. Genewick): The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Land Use Committee recommends that the GWNC Board not support the Small Lot Subdivision project (six duplexes on small lots) at 850-860 N. Sycamore, 7014 Willoughby, and 853-59 N. Orange Dr. as presented.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Fuller reported that the developer first was invited to present in July 2015. Ms. Moser was “disappointed” that the presentation was not made sooner, to give the committee more time to review the project.

MOTION PASSED by a hand vote with five in favor; three opposed; one abstained.

Mr. Wolf invited the presenters to return if their Hearing is continued.

- C. Initial presentation, discussion and possible action on an application for a tract map for a Small Lot Subdivision project at 3607 W. Olympic Blvd. (Lazlo Faerstain, Victor Elia) Proposal is for 6 units on a 7,982 square foot lot in the C2-1 zone.

Owner/developer Lazlo Faerstam presented and showed photos on his computer of the lot. He said “we’re in the beginning . . . we kind of cleaned up the property . . . it automatically qualifies as an R-4.” He said the project would be “duplexes, townhome style . . . three stories” and that he will return with a full presentation next month. No Motion was made or vote taken.

6. Committee Member Reports (including discussion and possible action items, if listed)

A. Transportation Committee Liaison Report (Stromberg)

Update on local transportation issues GWNC is monitoring.

Ms. Stromberg was not present and there was no report.

7. Committee Member Comments/Announcements

- A. Comments are now open on the city's proposed amendments to the Small Lot Subdivision Ordinance (which the GWNC board voted to support in August, 2014)...and on the new ReCodeLA zoning revisions. Comment deadline is in February, for those who are interested in these issues.

Committee Member Mike Genewick left at this time (9:49), making eight Committee Members present (the Committee quorum is seven).

Copies were distributed of “a proposed ordinance amending Section 12.22-C.27 (Small Lot Ordinance).” Mr. Hunt explained the issue and challenges, and announced that the South Hollywood Neighborhood Association will hold a community meeting on the proposed amendments on Wednesday, February 10th (a time which, unfortunately, conflicts with the monthly GWNC Board meeting). Ms. Gilman requested that Mr. Hunt forward SLS information to the Committee. There was extensive discussion of the evolution of City planning and documents, and how best to research and consider citywide issues. Another subcommittee was suggested to study the issue, but there were no volunteers.

B. Possible agenda items for upcoming meeting:

- i. Update on new 2-story, 40 unit Density Bonus project at 700-716 S. Manhattan
- ii. Density bonus with on-menu incentives for a 40-unit, 2-story residential development at 7000-7024 W. Melrose Ave.
- iii. Construction of a 4-story, 18-unit condominium development at 4807-4813 W. Oakwood
- iv. Updates on plans for townhouses and condominiums at 612 S. Norton and 4055 W. Wilshire Blvd.
- v. Update on an application for a tract map to allow construction of a new 8-unit condominium building at 800 S. Lorraine

- vi. Update on an application to build a new 5-story, 44-unit condominium building at 836-850 S. Crenshaw
- vii. Application for a 4-unit small lot subdivision project at 6929 Clinton
- viii. 4-unit small lot subdivision at 901 S. Gramercy

Mr. Wolf noted the above.

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

[This was the second Item #7 on the Agenda.] There were no requests at this time.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Levin
Minutes Writer

The first paragraph of some Items, Motions/Resolutions and other wording may have been directly copied from the Agenda. Edited by GWNC. The GWNC Minutes page is <http://www.greaterwilshire.org/site/site/?q=node/580>.